

CLASSIFICATION OFFICE DECISION

Title of publication: Monty Python's Life of Brian

Other known title(s): Life of Brian

OFLC ref: 2000380.000

Medium: Film 35mm

Director: Terry Jones

Producer: John Goldstone

Country of origin: United Kingdom

Language: English

Applicant: Arlo Scholes

Classification:	Unrestricted: Suitable for mature audiences 16 years of age and over.
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Excisions: No excisions recommended

Descriptive note: Violence, offensive language and nudity.

Display conditions: None

Date of entry in Register: 24 November 2020

Date of direction to issue a label: No direction to issue a label has been issued

Date of notice of decision: No notice of decision has been issued

	Components	Running time
Feature(s):	Monty Python's Life of Brian	93:40
Total running time:		93:40

Summary of reasons for decision:

'Monty Python's Life of Brian' is an iconic British film from 1979. It was classified R16 by the Chief Censor of Films in 1980. Its initial release caused global controversy because it satirises the story of Christ. The film follows the misadventures of Brian Cohen who is mistaken for the messiah. The applicant has requested that the film be reconsidered because 40 years have passed since it was classified under outdated legislation. After considering the content of the film under the current legislation, the Classification Office considers that the film no longer warrants a restriction as its availability. While the film deals with violence, cruelty and highly offensive language it does so in a

satirical and overtly theatrical manner. The impact of this content is further limited by the tone and context. However, this material does make it more suitable for mature audiences. While the film is still likely to cause offense to some, its availability cannot be restricted based on the likelihood of offense alone. Given the film's reputation it is unlikely that people will approach it without some knowledge of its content. Therefore the film is classified as Unrestricted: M. This classification is consistent with the right to freedom of expression as set out in s14 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.